of Natural History occupies a more substantial basis than before as an active scientific institution, advancing as well as diffusing natural knowledge. The numbers thus far published are solid additions to biology and would do credit to any institution. The articles are thus far all by Mr. R. P. Whitfield, the able curator of palæontology, and refer to the palæozoic fossils of New York, Iowa, Indiana and Illinois, besides his "Description of *Limnæa megasoma*, with an account of changes produced in the offspring by unfavorable conditions of life." The partly colored plate illustrating this essay, is a beautiful one. The most valuable palæontological paper is Mr. Whitfield's observations on the purpose of the embryonic sheaths of Endoceras, and their bearing on the origin of the siphon in the Orthocerata.

EMERTON'S NEW ENGLAND SPIDERS[1].—This brochure contains descriptions of the New England species of the family Theridiidæ, and is illustrated with twenty-four excellent photo-lithographic plates. These spiders are small and slender, spinning webs, often of large size, and living in them, hanging by their claws, back downward, and catching and eating the insects which become entangled among the threads. In many species the colors are plain, without any markings on the legs or abdomen. The amount of color varies greatly in individuals of the same species of certain genera; some being nearly white, and others nearly black. In other genera, the colors are bright and distinct. In most of the species there is considerable difference between the sexes, the males having the abdomen smaller, the legs longer, and the head higher than the females. Many details are given on the plates of the palpi, eyes, etc.

LACAZE-DUTHIERS' HISTORY OF LAURA GERARDIÆ.[2]—This elegant volume is devoted to the morphology, histology and developmental history of a singular crustacean which is parasitic on a coral. The work is a worthy successor of the richly illustrated monographs which the gifted author has successively given to the world, a series beginning with his treatise on the morphology of the ovipositor of insects, and containing those on Dentalium, the red coral and other important types. The illustrations are drawn by the author, whose facile use of the pencil is only equaled by his power with the scalpel, and we may add, the injecting syringe —the French anatomists excelling, we think, in making delicate injections of minute animals.

Laura is a parasitic crustacean, which externally is kidney-shaped and covered over by a growth of polyps of the antipatharian coral Gerardia. The body of the crustacean is covered by a

[1]From the Transactions of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences, Vol. VI. 1882. 8vo, p. 86.

[2] *Histoire de la Laura gerardiæ, type nouveau de Crustacé parasite.* Par H. DE LACAZE-DUTHIERS. *Institute de France.* Memoires de l'Academie des Sciences. Extrâit du Tome XLII. Paris, 1882. 4to, p. 160, 8 plates.